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REVIEW OF PRIORITY THEMES

Note verbale dated 25 May 1995 from the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations (Vienna) addressed to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna

The Permanent Mission of Italy presents its compliments to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and has the honour to herewith enclose the text of the preliminary report prepared by the International Task-Force on the study of feasibility for the establishment of an international training centre for law enforcement and criminal justice personnel (the first meeting of which was held at Rome from 17 to 18 May 1995, at the invitation of the Italian Government).

The Permanent Mission of Italy has the honour also to request that the report be submitted to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its fourth session.

The Permanent Mission of Italy avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna the assurances of its highest consideration.

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Preliminary report of the meeting of the international task force to study the feasibility of establishing an international training centre for law enforcement and criminal justice personnel, held at Rome from 17 to 18 May 1995

1. The World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime, held at Naples, Italy, from 21 to 23 November 1994, adopted a resolution entitled "Establishment of an international task force" (A/49/748, annex, chap. I, sect. B). In that resolution, the World Ministerial Conference expressed its appreciation for the proposals of the Government of Italy to organize an international task force for the elaboration of proposals on the feasibility of establishing an international training centre for law enforcement and criminal justice personnel.

2. A preliminary meeting of the task force was held at Rome from 17 to 18 May 1995, at the invitation of the Italian Government. The following States were represented: Argentina, Canada, China, Colombia, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela.

3. The discussions were opened on the basis of a document presented by the Italian delegation containing various proposals on the implementation of the above-mentioned resolution. The main problems that the task force was confronted with were related to:

(a) Location, structure and status of the centre;

(b) Objectives of the centre;

(c) Organization of the courses;

(d) Programmes and activities;

(e) Costs and funding of the centre.

4. A general agreement was reached that, in the short term, the most logical location for the training centre would be the premises of the existing centre of advanced studies for personnel of law enforcement agencies, in the building of the Italian Ministry of the Interior, situated at Rome in Via di Priscilla. The task force welcomed and accepted the generous offer of the Italian Government to provide a location for the training centre. In the long run, other solutions might be envisaged, taking into consideration the achievements of the training centre during its transitional period.

5. It was considered that setting up the centre as a United Nations institute would not be advisable as it would lead to many difficulties (international status of personnel, level of salaries, diplomatic privileges, *accord de siège*, tax exemption etc.). It seemed preferable for the centre to be an international training centre under the auspices and within the framework of the United Nations. It was emphasized that the centre should not be a scientific or research institute but should focus its activities on operative matters, drawing on the expertise of government officials and magistrates.

6. A management board open to representatives of Italian administrations and representatives of interested Governments and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Secretariat could act as a steering committtee; that proposal would need further elaboration.

7. The objectives of the centre could be drawn from the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan against Organized Transnational Crime (A/49/748, annex, chap. I, sect. A), in particular the principle of concerted action to enhance at all levels international cooperation in the fight against organized transnational crime. Although the centre would provide training and technical assistance for law enforcement and criminal justice personnel from developing countries or countries in transition, it would coordinate its activities with other institutions to avoid duplication of effort.

8. The centre would provide a forum in which persons responsible for making and implementing law enforcement and criminal justice policy could identify impediments to international cooperation and find practical means to overcome such impediments based on national experiences. In general, each of the courses, seminars and workshops organized by the centre should be held for a period not to exceed four weeks (the maximum suitable length), should be of a specialized character and should take into consideration the geographical areas of the participants. Special seminars might also be organized "on request".

9. As for the programmes and activities of the centre, a preliminary list of items was examined; that list would be subject to enlargement, depending on proposals that might be made by various States before the second meeting of the task force.

10. On the cost of the project and the organizational, administrative and functional resources of the centre, it was stated that the Italian Government intended to provide the site for the centre, as well as the administrative staff and the infrastructure needed for its functioning (interpreters, documentation, hardware and software); it was also considering offering accommodation and board to participants in the courses, seminars and workshops organized by the centre. An evaluation of the costs was being carried out by the Italian Government.

11. Other Governments would be invited to make contributions on a voluntary basis for the activities of the centre, including special projects, texts and documentation in foreign languages. Travel expenses of participants, teachers and experts from their countries who would become temporary members of the staff should, in principle, be borne by the respective Governments. In this context, special needs of participants from developing countries or countries in transition should be taken into consideration.

12. At its second meeting, the task force would further elaborate the project, keeping in mind the proposals and suggestions of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch and the various States represented at the first meeting. Such proposals and suggestions should be sent to the Italian Government, if possible by 30 June 1995.